

REMARKS

The Office Action of April 27, 1999, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over the patent to Kobler, et al. in view of the patent to Fantoni, et al., the patent to Johnson, the patent to Tittgemeyer, and in view of applicants' acknowledged prior art.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 1, and further in view of the patent to Fromson, et al. and the patent to Gerhardt.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 1.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 1, and further in view of the patent to Kuhn, et al. and the patent to Morgan.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references, and further in view of each of Kuhn, et al. and Gerhardt.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references, and further in view of Kuhn, et al., Lewis and Berna, et al.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Johnson, Fantoni, et al., Tittgemeyer and acknowledged prior art.

Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 8, and further in view of the patent to Dekumbis, et al.

Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Fantoni, et al., Johnson, Fromson, et al., Gerhardt, Tittgemeyer and acknowledged prior art.

Claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Fantoni, et al., Kuhn, et al., Morgan, Johnson, Tittgemeyer and acknowledged prior art.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Johnson, Fantoni, et al., Kuhn, et al., Tittgemeyer, Gerhardt and acknowledged prior art.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Johnson, Fantoni, et al., Fadner, et al., Morgan, Jenkins, Tittgemeyer, and acknowledged prior art.

The patent to Kobler, et al. discloses a register device for a sleeve-shaped offset printing form. Although Kobler, et al. disclose a weld seam, they provide absolutely no teaching concerning a weld seam which is processed on its outer surface, as in the presently claimed invention. Kobler, et al. provide no teaching concerning a carrying sleeve in which the entire outer circumferential surface, including the weld seam can be used for printing. Format variable continuous printing is not possible with the Kobler, et al. sleeve.

The patent to Fantoni, et al. contains absolutely no teaching concerning a weld seam. Instead, Fantoni, et al. teach a filler material 8. It is removed at the end of printing. This type of connection does not provide a sleeve which can be mounted by pressurized air onto a cylinder core. Furthermore, Fantoni, et al. do not teach a metal weld seam which has an outer surface that is processed so that the outer surface of the weld seam and the outer surface of the metal sheet together form a continuous outer circumferential surface for printing, as in the presently claimed invention. Furthermore, the filler material 8 of Fantoni, et al. does not form part of the printing region since it does not conform with the remaining photoreceptive layer 5. Thus, a format variable endless printing with the sleeve of Fantoni, et al. is not possible. The

purpose of the filler material 8 of Fantoni, et al. is only to prevent impact which would otherwise be caused by the channel. Fantoni, et al. thus does not teach a continuous printing surface as is dealt with in the presently claimed invention but only deals with or mentions a continuous surface in connection with the avoidance of a channel or groove.

The patent to Johnson also only deals with a continuous surface in connection with a channel-free surface. Furthermore, Johnson provides absolutely no teaching concerning a carrying sleeve which can be expanded by pressurized air for placement on a printing cylinder, as is dealt with in the presently claimed invention.

Tittgemeyer disclose a method and apparatus for printing with a lithographic sleeve. Tittgemeyer provide no teaching concerning a weld seam or the processing of a crown portion of the weld seam to provide a continuous outer circumferential metal surface made up of the outer surface of the metal sheet and the weld seam so as to permit continuous printing with all regions of the outer surface including the weld seam, as in the presently claimed invention.

The Examiner combined these references in determining that claims 1, 2 and 8 would be unpatentable over such a combination. It is respectfully submitted that although some of the references might at first glance show features which on the surface appear similar to those of the presently claimed invention, upon closer inspection of the references applicants respectfully submit that there is nothing in the teachings of any of the references which suggest modifying or suggest the desirability of modifying the sleeve of Kobler, et al. to arrive at the presently claimed invention. There is nothing in the teachings of the references which suggests that the features of Johnson, Fantoni, et al. or Tittgemeyer should be applied to the sleeve-shaped printing form of Kobler, et al. Kobler, et al. deal purely with registering a printing form and there is nothing in the teaching of this reference or the other references cited by the Examiner for a carrying sleeve

which has a weld seam with an outer surface that is processed so that the entire outer surface of the sleeve including the weld seam and the metal sheet can be used for printing. Furthermore, since neither Fantoni, et al., Johnson or Tittgemeyer deal with a sleeve which can be expanded by pressurized air it is respectfully submitted that it would not be obvious to take the teachings of these references and in any meaningful way apply them to the teachings of Kobler without first having the present application as a guide.

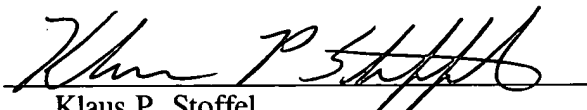
In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of claims 1-17 under 35 USC 103(a) are overcome and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application ; however, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

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